STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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SEALIFT DEPLOYMENT:
VIEWING DEPLOYMENT AS AN ARMY CORE COMPETENCY
OR
"WALKING IS NOT AN OPTION"

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Since the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) made the announcement in October 1999 that United States Army forces need to be tailored, structured and supported to facilitate an even more rapid deployment, the Department of the Army (DA) has been focused on identifying deployment enablers that can support the new deployment standard. Though the transformed force will be lighter and not have nearly as much tail, it still presents itself as a movements challenge. Nearly 17 months later the primary focus has been on determining the right mix of transports to support the new deployment timeline. Interestingly, the primary themes central to identifying deployment enablers are "more", "faster" and "increased capacity" transport — an approach that places more emphasis on technology than process or the human factor in order to overcome the challenges of time, speed and distance.

Essentially, "more", "faster" and "increased capacity" transports will eventually support the deployment timeline. But there is a human element that needs to be addressed involving the administrative details of the deploying unit's ability to accurately document deploying equipment and cargo that ultimately affects the effectiveness and efficiency of the deployment process. Though there is at this time no computerized means and supporting data to analyze the impact of inaccurate documentation on the deployment process, it stands to reason that improperly documented equipment and cargo will delay the process. It needs to be recognized that properly performed administrative requirements are also part of the solution for deploying forces faster and thus contributing to timely force closure.

The purpose of this study is to examine this basic yet complex issue of the responsibility for and the implications of valid, accurate documentation to operational readiness. The study will focus on Army deployments, as the Army comprises the bulk of military cargo moved through the DTS during force movements. It will also only address sea deployment, as approximately 90% of any deployment will be transported by vessel. There needs to be an appreciation translated into action for accurate documentation and its relative impact on deployment and subsequently, operational employment.

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"WALKING IS NOT AN OPTION"

Lucy says, "Well, I learned a lot in school today... I learned all about transportation." Charlie Brown asks, "What did you learn?" Lucy responds with, "If you miss the bus, you walk!"

— Classic Peanuts, Charles M. Schulz

Any questions! In light of the Army's new deployment timeline we know that walking is not an option. In fact, we are not able to get there fast enough. Therefore, our deployment options are not as simplistic as the one expressed by Lucy. At the risk of sounding pessimistically realistic, tomorrow's Army will never be fast enough for tomorrow's crisis. America's Army cannot afford to miss the bus. In a worst case scenario, missing the bus results in the failure to give a combatant commander the necessary combat power in a timely fashion in order to carry out his campaign plan. It appears Lucy has learned a valuable strategic lesson in deployment. But has the U.S. Army?

Since the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) made the announcement in October 1999 that United States Army forces need to be tailored, structured and supported as such to facilitate an even more rapid deployment, the Department of the Army (DA) has been focused on identifying deployment enablers that can support the new deployment standard. Though the transformed force will be lighter and not have nearly as much tail, it still presents itself as a movements challenge. From a transportation perspective and nearly 17 months later the primary focus has been on determining the right mix of transports to support the new deployment timeline and thus to close the force faster. It was identified in January 2001 that it will take 7.5 days (180 hours), as opposed to the 96-hour requirement (almost twice as long), to airlift an interim brigade combat team (IBCT) to the objective based upon a best case scenario and in light of current capabilities and throughput.[1] Sealift will be the primary mode to deploy five divisions in 30 days. Though the initial analysis indicates the timeline can be met, it will do so through additional investment (at the expense of the taxpayer) in watercraft and vessels possessing increased technological capabilities.

Interestingly, the primary themes central to identifying deployment enablers in order to overcome the deployment gap are "more", "faster" and "increased capacity" transport — an approach that places more emphasis on technology than process or the human factor in order to overcome the challenges of time, speed and distance.[2] Essentially, "more", "faster" and "increased capacity" transports will eventually support the deployment timeline but at a cost to

the American taxpayer such as the $6.2 billion spent on surge sealift since 1990 or the $34 billion spent since the same period to improve our comprehensive force projection capability.[3] But there is a human element that needs to be addressed involving the administrative details of a deployment that ultimately influences the effectiveness and efficiency of the deployment process. Customers, i.e., deploying units, have the responsibility for accurately documenting their deploying equipment and cargo. Though there is at this time no computerized means and supporting data to analyze the impact of inaccurate documentation on the deployment process,[4] it stands to reason that improperly documented equipment and cargo will delay the process at least at one of two key points, the air or sea port of embarkation (A/SPOE) or the air or sea port of debarkation (A/SPOD) with the first delay at the A/SPOE. Why? Because it is obligatory for the port operator to ensure, that which is shipped through the Defense Transportation System (DTS), is properly documented in order to have intransit and asset visibility (and accountability) as well as to provide the documents required by law for the sailing of a vessel. Essentially, it is professionally unconscionable for uncorrected documentation inaccuracies to be carried through the DTS. It needs to be recognized that properly performed administrative requirements are also part of the solution for deploying forces faster and thus contributing to a timely force closure.

But it is also unconscionable for a commander of a deploying unit to jeopardize the availability of his unit and the supportability of the deployment process to the combatant CINC by neglecting command responsibility for ensuring accurate, transportation documentation. Because of the overwhelming volume of Army cargo moved by sea transport it is appropriate that the argument found in this paper for advocating accurate documentation is focused on sealift deployments. Inaccurately documented cargo arriving at a SPOE impacts a number of areas: diverts intended workload of port personnel, delays the availability of cargo for movement, delays vessel operations, delays the departure and arrival schedules of all incoming and outgoing modes of transport, complicates the accountability and thus visibility of deploying assets, particularly sensitive and hazardous cargo and contributes to mismanagement and misallocation of sealift. Obviously, the problems experienced at the SPOE will carry over to every aspect of operations in-theater. Though more, faster and increased capacity sealift continues to be able to compensate for administrative inadequacy, there could realistically be a time when it cannot compete with unit compliance of basic documentation standards. There could also be a time when the American taxpayer demands that existing sealift assets are maximized through administrative competence. Then again, we are encouraged to be good

stewards of taxpayers' dollars, and therefore, should take it upon ourselves to self-correct the human factor for the betterment of the deployment process.

The purpose of this study is to examine this basic yet complex issue of the responsibility for and the implications of valid, accurate documentation to operational readiness. The study will focus on Army sea deployments, as the Army comprises the bulk of military cargo moved through the DTS during force movements. There needs to be an appreciation translated into action for accurate documentation and its relative impact on readiness. Improper documentation will cause a delay in the deployment process and will affect operational readiness, whether it is taking the time to make corrections at the port, leaving equipment behind, sailing a ship with a light load, not moving the right sequence of priorities into theater or not knowing what and when unit equipment and cargo have moved into theater.

THE DEPLOYMENT PROCESS

Force projection is comprised of five processes: mobilization, deployment, employment, sustainment and redeployment.[5] It is the deployment process of force projection that is being discussed in this paper. The deployment process is comprised of four phases: pre-deployment activities, movement to and activities at the POE (fort to port), movement to the POD (port to port) and joint, reception, staging, onward movement and integration (JRSOI).[6] It is in the pre-deployment activities phase of the deployment process when equipment and cargo are identified, prepared and documented for movement by deploying units. As one can ascertain, because pre-deployment activities occur at the initial stages of force projection and the deployment process, what is done or not done well here will have significant impact and is a key determinant on the outcome of a deployment and on force closure. Bottom line: the degree to which deploying units provide accurate documentation influences the degree of success for the deployment to close as a timely combat capable unit.

AN INSTRUCTIVE SCENARIO

It was January 1999 and it had become increasingly clear that United States military forces would become involved in another military operation in the Balkans. This time it would be Kosovo. The 838th Transportation Battalion, which has responsibility for moving and managing Department of Defense cargo through northern European seaports and on the inland waterways throughout Central Europe, had begun planning for the sea deployment of V Corps elements, designated as Task Force Falcon, through Bremerhaven, Germany, the designated SPOE. For nearly the next five months the Battalion would be engaged in the Corps' planning conferences, briefing the concept of SPOE operations and ensuring that deploying elements understood their

responsibilities for completing transportation documentation prior to being received at the SPOE. As a result, deploying units had a solid understanding of their responsibilities for the mechanics of documenting deploying equipment and cargo that included hazardous materials, sensitive items and an internal system for identifying priorities to be used for ship stowage.

The Corps executed a rock drill for the deployment of Task Force Falcon just two days prior to the start of the air campaign. Its purpose was to brief the Corps Commander on the concept of deployment from various unit locations in Germany to the SPOE, to the SPOD (Thessaloniki, Greece) and the subsequent reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSO&I) of Task Force Falcon into Albania. At a given point during the rock drill the Battalion Commander explained the reception, staging, upload and documentation of deploying equipment and cargo at the SPOE; this explanation incorporated the documentation requirements that would be completed by the deploying units. Upon conclusion the Corps Commander asked her some basic yet critical questions: "what will you do if the placards for maintaining unit integrity and identifying priorities are not done due to time constraints?"; "what if these placards are inaccurately annotated?"; "what happens when units arrive out of sequence?"; "what if equipment arrives at the port that is not listed in the deployment database but needs to be loaded on the ship as part of the task force?"; "what happens if the LOGMARS labels are not on the equipment or are not accurate?" The Battalion Commander responded with, "Sir, we'll make it happen at the port!" Immediately believing she had provided the Corps Commander with an inappropriate response and was expecting to be told the same, he instead emphatically responded with "Colonel, that is the right answer." But is it?

Recognizing up-front there would be minimum time to execute the deployment to and through the SPOE upon issuance of the execute order, the deploying units agreed to "personnel augmentation" from the transportation battalion to assist with their documentation requirements. However, the documentation teams were not as effective as planned due to the limited time between notification and execution. Just 48 hours prior to the publishing of the execute order there was no indication that V Corps would be directed to deploy. Within 24 hours after receipt of the execute order, the first piece of military cargo arrived at the SPOE. Documentation teams began augmenting units on N+1 based upon their sequence of movement. Subsequently, vessel operations commenced on N+3, upload of the first LMSR was completed on N+8 and sailed on N+9, upload of the second vessel commenced on N+9 with all cargo clearing the port on N+11.

In the end, the documentation teams were not sufficiently robust to initiate, validate and correct source data in light of the speed of the deployment and the volume of source data that

required adjustment. It was a massive undertaking that could not resolve what was a unit commander's responsibility. The result was twofold. First, there was not clear visibility of deploying assets inbound to the SPOE because the Corps' equipment deployment database (TC ACCIS) did not correlate with what was physically arriving at the port. Second, initial (source) documentation of deploying assets was primarily accomplished at the SPOE by the port operator, resulting in an unnecessary hectic situation. Executing the deployment in this manner placed the operational readiness of the task force at risk. Though the mission at the SPOE was accomplished by deploying Task Force Falcon within prescribed time constraints, it was successful due to the cooperative efforts between the Corps staff, deploying units, unit liaisons (LNOs) and the transportation battalion. But this was not a judicious use of valuable time. Though it would be easier to be satisfied with this success, it is never the less important that critical thought is applied in order to recognize that the Army can no longer afford to approach deployments in this manner – the deployment timeline requires efficient support and eventually the American taxpayer will not tolerate it.

Though the challenges addressed by the Corps Commander did in fact occur and were overcome, the question remains, are changes required in the pre-deployment activities phase of the deployment process in order to effect timely deployments and accurate accounting of warfighting assets? What are the risks a commander takes when deploying assets are not accurately documented? Why are commanders not assuming responsibility for conducting deployment documentation? Though one would think deployment would be a key warfighter core competency the fact remains it is not but it is typically a key task on the mission essential task list (METL) for units with a deployment mission – should deployment be a core competency? Is the system being unreasonable to expect deploying units to be responsible for timely and accurate identification and documentation of deploying assets? Is it acceptable for transportation port operators to rectify documentation issues at the port in lieu of versus in addition to unit responsibility?

THE PROCESS ITSELF

JP 1-02 defines deployment as "all activities from origin or home station through destination, specifically including intra-continental United States, intertheater, and intratheater movement legs, staging, and holding areas." Figure 1 captures the essence of this definition, figuratively addressing the four phases of deployment.[7] However, one could erroneously conclude that the deployment process is uncomplicated in nature and thus may be undeserving of significant emphasis. But recalling the CSA's timelines, five divisions must be on point in 30

days. This represents a significant amount of material and supporting lift that must be sequenced and synchronized in light of throughput limitations to and through SPOEs, and subsequently into the supported theater. The challenges of time, distance and speed are also portrayed. Time equates to the deployment timeline as set forth by the CSA; when combined with distance and thus the rapid strategic responsiveness required of U.S. Army forces to worldwide crises, it necessitates enablers and infrastructure that facilitates speed. Prepositioned assets are one means to increase responsiveness, as is more and faster sealift.
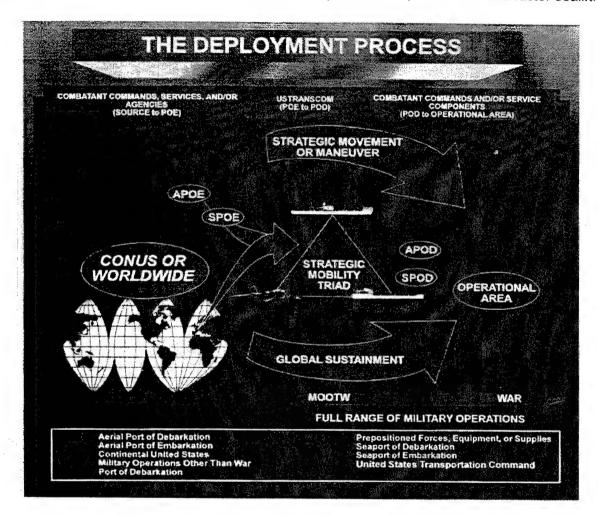

FIGURE 1 – THE DEPLOYMENT PROCESS

But what is inferred is it is not enough for deploying units to "just" arrive at the SPOE for transport to the combatant CINC. Recognizing upfront that identifying and accurately documenting what needs to be deployed is only one aspect of the myriad of requirements that a commander needs to address for a deployment, it still remains an aspect that can affect the speed of the deployment if not done accurately. A commander needs to respect the process in

order for the process to support the combatant CINC. If the commander's intent does not convey compliance with documentation standards to his subordinates, a delay, accompanied by decreased throughput, in moving forces will result at every point as annotated in Figure 1. Contending with the domino effect when one or more steps of a process are not accomplished as designed does not permit maximum utilization and effectiveness of the deployment process, and the supporting infrastructure, transports, automated systems and human efforts.

THE ROLE OF ACCURATE DOCUMENTATION IN FORCE TRACKING

Force tracking is defined as "the process of gathering and maintaining information on the location, status, and predicted movement of each element of a unit (including the unit's command element, personnel, and unit-related supplies and equipment) while in transit to the specified operational area."[8] In order to provide a combatant CINC with an accurate picture of materiel that has been moved into or within theater, accurate data must first be provided by deploying units that is captured in the deployment database, TC ACCIS. Data from this system is used to populate the Global Transportation Network (GTN) that captures the movement of units and material, and subsequently provides the combatant CINC and his commanders the visibility to be able to make decisions on operational employment. Though the Army has the level of maturity in its force tracking automated capability for it to be invaluable to units (though much work still needs to be accomplished) it is not being used at the level of providing significant insight into readiness due to the quality of the source data as a true operational picture can only be portrayed on complete, accurate source date

It is stated in a USCINCTRANSCOM update on the Global Transportation Network, that one of the challenges to making GTN "DOD's premier system for the DTS" is "complete and accurate data that in part relies on complete and accurate documentation from the shipper."[9] Therefore, if the U.S. Army is to have visibility over its deploying assets there must be a conscientious effort from commanders and deploying units to have a disciplined approach to providing complete and accurate data. During the Gulf War, commanders were critical of the inability of not having a clear picture of materiel moving through the DTS. Since that time there has been significant progress in developing systems that can provide the intransit and asset visibility that was not available ten years ago. However, automated systems are not able to compensate for inaccurate source data but a commander can influence documentation accuracy and its potential usefulness. The point is assorted investments have been made to improve the deployment process but unless the source data is accurate, CINCs and

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commanders are basing today's critical decisions on data that is no more reliable, insightful and predicable than what was used during the last war.

A CRY FOR ACCURATE DOCUMENTATION

Transportation can be viewed from four perspectives: "the physical movement of goods, the documentation movement, the financial movement and then the information movement..."[10] It is critical to note that accurate documentation has a direct association to the physical, financial and information movements of assets. The relevancy of accurate documentation to physical and information movements have been addressed. The role documentation has in the financial movement is the linkage of identifying what will be and eventually has been deployed to the costs associated with executing a deployment. A customer is assessed charges based upon what and how much is moved combined with the labor (that includes overtime), sealift and materiel to execute the move. Accurate documentation also contributes to the degree to which the U.S. government can avoid penalties by properly documenting hazardous cargo in
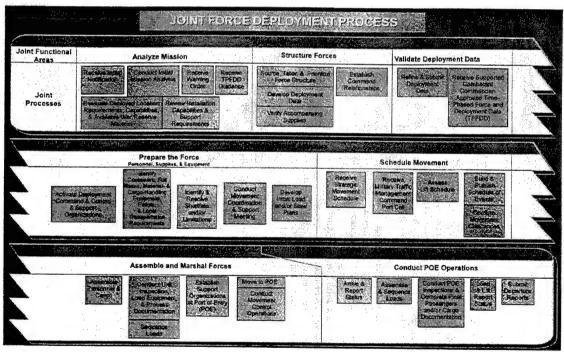

FIGURE 2 – JOINT FORCE DEPLOYMENT PROCESS

accordance with maritime law, not withstanding its implications on safety.

A review of joint and Army doctrine reveals that the requirement for accurate documentation is not readily apparent. In fact, doctrine limits its comments on the subject whereby it could be construed that its relative importance is insignificant, an incorrect

conclusion. However, Figure 2 from JP 3-35, Joint Deployment and Redeployment, points out that documentation for deploying assets is conducted by the deploying units during the assembly and marshalling of forces prior to being received at the SPOE. It is intended at this point for units to validate that equipment and cargo designated for movement in TC ACCIS replicates that which will physically deploy. Additionally, actual weight and dimensional data, commodity codes and destination SPOD(s) are validated and inserted in TC ACCIS, equipment is reconfigured for movement by sea, secondary loads are secured, hazardous materials are placarded and LOGMARs labels are applied. The cargo documentation activity noted under "Conduct POE Operations" pertains to the actions of a port operator for accounting for the status of cargo that has entered and departed the port; it should not be viewed as the (sole) means to conduct the entire documentation effort but rather for the port operator to make corrections on a "by exception" basis on that which should have occurred at the assembly and marshalling areas.

From this author's perspective, there is a shortfall of written, directive guidance that informs a deploying unit of the responsibilities for documentation. So how would a unit become aware of its specific documentation responsibilities? There are two primary sources. First, every unit with a deployment mission has a unit movements officer (UMO) and an assistant UMO appointed on orders. UMOs are trained either through the UMO course offered by Fort Eustis, Virginia, or by the installation responsible for overseeing force movements. It is at either of these training sites that instruction is provided for documenting unit cargo. Second, MTMC port personnel, to include reserve units with a documentation mission (deployment support brigades or DSB), will discuss with and train units on documentation procedures as well as assist during an actual deployment. Essentially, the people, systems and training are in place for affecting accurate documentation for sea deployments.

WHO'S RESPONSIBILITY IS IT ANYWAY?

There are eight primary organizations or individuals involved with planning and executing a sea deployment, of which three are essential for obtaining and validating source documentation and, one who has the responsibility and authority for ensuring that it is accomplished.[11] USTRANSCOM is responsible for all common-user sea transportation, port management and the procurement of sealift once the supporting CINC validates movement requirements. It is also the owner of GTN and thus is responsible for providing the means to intransit visibility. The Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC), as one of USTRANSCOM's components, provides the ocean terminal services at the SPOEs and SPODs

as well as for port management in its capacity as DoD's single port manager. The Military Sealift Command (MSC) provides the sealift for the movement between SPOEs and SPODs. The supported CINC identifies the units required to support the mission that is subsequently translated into the time-phased force and deployment data (TPFDD) for which transportation is apportioned and units use to designate equipment and cargo for deployment.

The Unit Movement Coordinator (UMC) represents the first point of responsibility for ensuring that deploying assets are properly documented. The UMC is designated at the installation level and is the deploying unit's point of contact for deployment matters. Theoretically, the UMC provides deploying units guidance and training on deployment documentation and subsequently validates that the assets have been properly documented before departing the installation regardless of mode. A key responsibility of the Division Transportation Officer (DTO) is to "provide technical assistance for unit movement training." A good example of a DTO engaging this aspect of his job is when the MTMC port operator for Jacksonville, Florida, (a force projection platform for the 101st Air Assault Division) was asked by the DTO to provide documentation training for the division's unit movement officers (UMO) and non-commissioned officers in preparation for a sea deployment readiness exercise (SEDRE). Because the UMO is at the unit level, he is the one individual who has the most direct influence as well as responsibility for the unit complying with transportation documentation standards.

None of the before mentioned personnel or agencies replace command responsibility. It cannot be stressed enough that a commander who is responsible for ensuring his unit is combat ready and must be able to deploy his unit is also responsible for ensuring his unit has accurately completed the administrative details of a deployment to include the transportation documentation of deploying unit assets.

THE CAUSES FOR INACCURATE DOCUMENTATION

There are three key reasons that contribute to units not providing accurate deployment documentation. First, there is insufficient, direct communication from the transporter to the deploying unit addressing documentation requirements. The issues typically discussed for force movements are ones involving timely arrival and departure of vessels, unit integrity aboard the vessel, loading IAW commander's priorities and cargo damage occurring after departure from home station. These are issues that a deploying unit is comfortable in addressing with port personnel. The port operator does not typically stress documentation accuracy or confronts the deploying unit with inaccuracies after a deployment. Generally, transporters have a difficult time articulating the key challenge they face at the ports: accurate identification and documentation

of deploying cargo. The reason for this is not clear but it can be speculated that it has roots in the customer service orientation of the logistics culture.

The second reason pertains to how a commander views the relative importance of investing time in providing accurate documentation to operational readiness combined with a unit commander's familiarity or comfort level with documentation procedures and the supporting automated processes. If a commander does not appreciate or recognize the value of accurate documentation then it is likely that the unit will not provide it. Additionally, the failure to address documentation issues as opposed to other issues is evident in after action reports or final operation's reports to Congress; this is indicative of how deployment documentation is viewed in terms of its importance to other aspects of an operation. Regrettably, documentation is the administrative, "behind the scenes" details that nobody cares to do or takes an interest in until someone more senior necessitates its worth. One after action report and one report to Congress addressing the two operations to the Balkans since 1996 discards the impact that inaccurate documentation provided by deploying units had on seaport operations and ultimately on the combatant CINC.[12] However, in a book published by USTRANSCOM, it identifies as one of the major lessons from the Gulf War a need to enforce documentation discipline.[13] But this is a reference that only transporters have probably read and therefore, the lesson is not gained by the deploying units.

Last, unit commanders limit the amount of time a UMO is assigned to this function. On the average, a UMO normally holds the responsibility for six to twelve months. With fourteen thousand UMOs identified Army-wide that equates to an identical training requirement.[14] Obviously, this dynamic creates a challenge with which neither units nor the training base can maintain pace which results in eventual inaccuracies realized in source documentation and inefficiencies in the deployment process.

SOLUTIONS TO THIS DILEMMA

Three courses of action are worthy of consideration for effecting accurate documentation. First, commanders continue to retain responsibility for deployment documentation, recognizing that port operators will continue to make the necessary corrections, regardless of volume, at the port. Second, commanders continue to retain responsibility for deployment documentation and are solely responsible for ensuring accuracy of documentation prior to cargo received at the port. Third, commanders continue to retain responsibility for deployment documentation but a third party would be contracted to execute deployment documentation for the commander.

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The first course of action is a reflection of how documentation is completed today. Though this is a unit's responsibility and thus a commander's responsibility it is relegated to the transporter at the port to ensure there is accurate visibility and accountability of unit assets moving through the DTS. This is an inefficient and unintended means to affect the deployment process. It places responsibility on port personnel, i.e., non-unit personnel, for identifying and accounting for deploying assets to a unit commander and a combatant CINC. This course of action challenges the meaning of command responsibility and thus allows a commander to not take full responsibility for the readiness of his unit to be able to execute a deployment. It further brings into question the rationale for deployment as a METL task.

The second course of action advocates that a commander takes responsibility for what is already inherent in the function of command by ensuring that his unit is trained and capable to successfully complete deployment documentation. By doing so, a unit commander is taking responsibility for his own operational readiness. He is advocating a disciplined approach to deployment documentation and is able to obtain it because of command emphasis. It would be expected that unit assets would arrive at the port with essentially minimum inaccuracies, requiring the port operator to primarily validate unit documentation and focus on designed port operations.

The third course of action requires a contracted third party to assume responsibility for a portion of a commander's METL. While this is doable it is considered as a means to relieve the commander of his responsibility to demand and enforce discipline in the deployment process. Interestingly, a recent Army Science Board study suggested there are many opportunities to incorporate efficiencies that reduce administrative processing in the deployment process. It concludes, "Commercially, this is a fertile area of endeavor for increased productivity."[15] However, until it is determined that deployment documentation is too manpower intensive for units to accomplish as opposed to a lack of discipline, this is a course of action that sends the wrong message on the meaning of command and to the American taxpayer.

The recommended course of action is course of action two. It is achievable through command emphasis, enforced discipline and accountability for what one fails to do. Its feasibility is verified by a similar challenge that faced Air Mobility Command (AMC) concerning inaccurate documentation for air movements of hazardous cargo. In 1998, the AMC commander informed its customers that it would no longer accept cargo that was not documented properly and that this policy would immediately go into effect. In a short period of time, AMC customers drastically improved the accuracy of their documentation. Naturally, this

begs the question of why isn't the same degree of accuracy insisted and achieved for sealift movements?

DEPLOYMENT AS A CORE COMPETENCY

How well something is done typically reflects the degree of emphasis placed on it by its leadership, which is indicative of its relative importance to organizational success. If "it" is inextricably linked to an organization's survivability it is probable that "it" will be viewed as a priority. The same is true for deployment competence. For too long it has been accepted that "somehow" inaccurately documented assets will more often than not arrive at some point at its intended destination, and until it does arrive, its delay would just have to be accepted. It has also been "expected" that someone else outside of the unit would fix the inaccuracies. Unit commanders and their soldiers considered this as how the deployment process was supposed to operate. However, since the opening of nearly 40% of Desert Shield/Desert Storm containers combined with changing national security and military strategies demanding a different type of Army, there has been considerable attention given to the Army's ability to be strategically responsive. We know we cannot meet today's new deployment timeline based upon the way we currently conduct business. As Mark Twain once remarked, "Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits." Therefore, how can the Army change its deployment documentation habits and correlate its significance to operational readiness?

WHAT IS A CORE COMPETENCY

FM 1 (Draft Prototype), The Army, defines core competencies as "the essential and enduring capabilities of our services. While they are not necessarily unique to the Army, they define our fundamental contributions to our nation's security."[16] The term "core competency" is a business term that refers to the primary capabilities that an organization must possess in order for it to be successful. For a military service core competencies are "what a service does best."[17] It is also described as "the fundamental roles that a service component commander conducts in support of the Unified Combatant Commander's mission."[18] The term has been freely used in the logistics community for approximately the past ten years. It is now being proposed as doctrine in FM 1.

FM 1 sets forth the purpose, professional ethos, imperatives and core competencies of the U.S. Army which, when combined, exude an Army character that can support our national military strategy, national security strategy and the American people. It articulates what most Army personnel have come to accept as the set of capabilities that allow our Army to be successful in land operations. The genesis for a successful Army are its Title 10 responsibilities

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that provides the foundation for maturing the Army into a trained, ready and responsive force, and in essence, allows America to employ the military arm of power. Most likely, deterrence involves minimal, if any, need for force projection. However, if deterrence fails, the Army is required to conduct "prompt, sustained and decisive land actions as part of a joint force." Because the posturing of U.S. forces mandates a rapid, strategic response capability, one would expect that competence in all facets of deployment would be a unit priority and that discipline in the deployment process, to include tedious documentation requirements, would be enforced by commanders and leaders. But is it? The indicators are it is not.

Army Vision 2010 states that "the fundamental competency" of the Army is the ability to "conduct prompt and sustained operations on land throughout the spectrum of crisis." How can the Army do this well if it shortchanges accurate documentation at the expense of operational readiness? It is not a question of if the force will be closed – it is a question of when it will close. If insufficient lift is procured, more can be acquired, but it will take time as the unit waits at the port. If the contents of a container are not annotated, it can be corrected at the port, but it will take time for it to be unstuffed, documented and restuffed. If a unit cannot be tracked through automated systems, there will be eventually a physical tracking, but it will take time. If the Army Vision is to have merit, now is the appropriate time to imbed deployment competence and hence, force projection, into the Army culture as a means to achieving operational readiness.

IS THIS THE SOLUTION?

There is not a better way to emphasis to unit commanders the criticality of deployment (force projection) that allows for our service capabilities to be responsive and effective than to establish deployment as a core competency. Though some leaders believe that force projection is beginning to gain prominence such as its introduction in BCTP and the staff and war colleges, it is still not enough and is not resulting in progress toward obtaining accurate deployment data.

As a core competency, the Army culture would be required to embrace, take responsibility and be held accountable for deployment competence rather than talking around it. For example, in light of the role that deployment has in projecting the transformation Army, it is interesting to note that FM 1 does not specifically address deployment as an Army primary function or core competency. The proposed doctrine has imbedded the unrealistic expectation that commanders will infer from "prompt response", which is identified as one of seven core competencies, a condition for competence in deployment.[19] Is this good enough?

Generally transporters, and specifically MTMC personnel, correct the documentation shortfalls at the port. Because of the customer-oriented approach generally found in the

transportation community combined with a logistician's professional responsibility to support the deploying units, documentation inaccuracies are rarely surfaced to the deploying units out of concern for not being viewed as an enabler. But fixing the inaccuracies without addressing it with units will continue to reinforce the lack of priority that deployment documentation currently has in Army units. As a core competency, the nature of deployment would evolve into being a significant factor to the Army's ability to be responsive as opposed to remaining as only a transporter's problem and concern.

CONCLUSION

Deployment of military forces is a difficult undertaking that lends itself towards a tendency for deploying units to disregard its relevance to combat readiness. Nevertheless, the Chief of Staff of the Army has directed that Army forces need to be more strategically responsive in order to be strategically relevant. This requires a concerted effort from commanders and leaders at all levels to recognize their individual and unit responsibilities to the deployment process by ensuring accurate documentation.

The Army will continue to be challenged in meeting the CSA's new deployment timeline. But it should not be challenged with that which is nothing more than a matter of quality control that can be easily resolved through command emphasis and basic leadership. Unit commanders can immediately change the quality of deployment documentation by merely insisting upon accuracy and compliance with documentation standards. If a unit commander were to employ the adage, "a unit does well what a commander checks," the improvement in documentation accuracy would be immediate with notable, visible affects on the effectiveness of the deployment process. Command emphasis, leadership and training, resulting in a disciplined approach toward deployment documentation can maximize the effectiveness of deployment process and its supporting infrastructure. The Army needs to be a good, deployment customer, its Title 10 responsibilities to the American people demand it and designating deployment as a core competency can assist it in becoming one. As the Army has become smaller and more CONUS based it stands to reason that the enlarged role deployment now has in America's capacity to be responsive demands its relative importance to be elevated as an Army core competency.

Word Count: 5,835

ENDNOTES

[1] "Army Deployability", Early Bird, 8 January 2002.

[2] James Glick, Faster: The Acceleration of Just About Everything, ((New York, New York): Panthem Books, 1999). The author addresses the compulsion of consciously and unconsciously doing "just about everything" faster while underlying the importance of understanding how people, systems and processes become victims of time.

[3] Samuel M. Cannon, "PM Force Projection," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Carlisle Barracks, U.S. Army War College, 9 January 2001.

[4] A senior transporter was asked about the significance of accurate documentation on the speed of the deployment process; his comment was there are no defining metrics or tools to permit such an analysis (however, he did not discount its relevance).

[5] Army Transportation School, "Commander's Strategic Deployment Guide;" available from http://www.transchool.eustis.army.mil/CDR.html; Internet; accessed 21 November 2000.

[6] Joint Staff, Joint Deployment and Redeployment, Joint Publication 3-35 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Joint Staff, 7 September 1999), ix.

[7] Joint Staff, Joint Deployment and Redeployment, I-12.

[8] Ibid., IV-II.

[9] "Global Transportation Network: A USCINCTRANS Update," Defense Transportation Journal (August 1999): 8.

[10] "Panel II: Web Technology & Defense Transportation," Defense Transportation Journal (December 2000): 31.

[11] Army Transportation School, "Commander's Strategic Deployment Guide."

[12] Department of Defense, Report to Congress: Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense).

[13] James K. Matthews and Cora J. Holt, So Many, So Much, So Far, So Fast (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996).

[14] "Panel III: Meeting Transportation Education Needs," Defense Transportation Journal (December 2000).

[15] Army Science Board, "FY1999 Summer Study Final Report: Enabling Rapid and Decisive Strategic Maneuver For The Army Beyond 2010,"Washington, D.C., August 1999, ES-5.

[16] Department of the Army, The Army, Field Manual Draft Prototype 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army), 16.

[17] Thomas C. Neal, "Defining Joint Vision 2010 in Terms of Service Core Competencies," U.S. Army Command and General Staff College C/M/S 500 Fundamentals of Operational Warfighting: L5-D-1.

[18] Ibid.

[19] The author of this paper discussed with the author FM 1 the reason for deployment not specifically addressed as a core competency.

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